

Briefing :: Listening to Victims of Child Sex Trafficking

Commission on Security & Cooperation in Europe: U.S. Helsinki Commission

Listening To Victims of Child Sex Trafficking

Committee Members Present:

Representative Christopher Smith (R-NJ);

Representative Steve Cohen (D-TN)

Witnesses:

“Mr. B”,

Survivor of Child Trafficking in Amsterdam, Netherlands

Klaas Langendoen,

Former Chief of Criminal Intelligence Services for the Netherlands,

Private Investigator

Adèle van der Plas,

Advocate,

Bakker Schut & Van Der Plas

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Washington, D.C., Representative Christopher Smith, CSCE Moderating

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REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTOPHER SMITH (R-NJ): The Commission will come to order, and I want to wish everybody a good afternoon and welcome to our briefing on “Listening to Victims of Child Sex Trafficking.” The sex trafficking and abuse of children is one of the most despicable, violent crimes on the face of the Earth, shattering the lives of the victims as well as their families, a crime from which the victims often cannot recover. And when they do so – and that’s rarely – they do so with great difficulty. The traffickers and abusers rely on their ability to frighten the child into silence, or the reluctance of adults to listen when children speak. They also use their own reputation, standing and/or power in the community to prevent allegations from being properly considered and investigated.

As we have seen recently in the tragic Sandusky case, child sex abuse case at Penn State, many sexually-abused children do not find a way to speak until they are adults. But when they do so, and are heard, others find the courage to come forward, putting the traffickers and the abusers behind bars and bringing

an end to a cycle of broken lives.

It is imperative that the justice system be ready to listen to allegations, and to thoroughly investigate allegations, no matter when they are raised and no matter who is accused. This year's Trafficking In Persons report – and I would note parenthetically, that in 2000, I was the author, the prime author, of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, as well as two subsequent reauthorizations of the TPVA (sic), and one of the provisions of that legislation established the annual TIP report, and the ratings of countries either Tier 1 to Tier 3. What the TIP report noted that, although the law – for this year – although the law in the Netherlands prescribes maximum sentences ranging from eight to 18 years imprisonment for individuals convicted of human trafficking, and that these penalties are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape, the laws are not being enforced.

According to the report, and I quote, “The average sentences imposed on convicted traffickers continued to be less than two years” – 21 months, to be exact – 21 months for destroying a woman's soul and body in the enslavement in a brothel. Nine convicted trafficking offenders received community service or a fine as punishment. The leader of a major Turkish-German woman trafficking organization was sentenced to seven years and nine months imprisonment for having forced at least 120 women into prostitution. That is just one month in jail for every life destroyed. And, by the way, the court let him out on bail and, to no surprise, he fled to Turkey, so he is currently not even serving the tiny sentence he received. That leaves me speechless. What is going on here? Do the courts in the Netherlands take human trafficking seriously?

This afternoon, we are going to consider how and to what extent allegations of trafficking and abuse should be investigated. We'll do so in the context of a particular series of cases, in which very, very serious allegations have been raised against the secretary-general at the Ministry of Justice in the Netherlands, Mr. Joris Demmink. Mr. Demmink has been accused by a witness – that will present today – of sexually abusing and raping the witness when the witness was being trafficked in a brothel in Amsterdam at the age of 15. The investigation into these accusations was suddenly and inexplicably halted, and law enforcement officials involved were allegedly sworn to secrecy. Mr. Demmink has been accused by two Turkish boys, now adults, of having raped them in Turkey between 1994 and the year 2003. At the time, the boys were 11 and 14, at least one of them was homeless, and trusted the Turkish police officer who brought to Mr. Demmink. The other was allegedly locked in a hotel room with Mr. Demmink, who assaulted him sexually.

The allegations are shocking and horrible. Mr. Demmink has a right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law, and that is a sacred right that I'm sure we all want to protect. At the same time, the allegations, when taken in their full context, are credible and deserve to be properly investigated, so that a prosecutor can make a responsible decision whether to proceed with a case against Mr. Demmink. That investigation has never happened. The investigations that have taken place have been a travesty, and

have done nothing to clear Mr. Demmink's name; rather, they have raised further questions.

Yesterday, the Netherlands' minister of Security and Justice, Mr. Opstelten, wrote to the Dutch parliament regarding this case and listing the actions taken by the justice department in regards to the allegations against Mr. Demmink. The letter states and I quote: "The nature of Mr. Demmink's job warrants a degree of vigilance," quote, unquote. I could not agree more. The fact that Mr. Demmink is the secretary-general of the Ministry of Justice, the very entity responsible to investigate the charges against him, should mean that the investigation into the allegations was one of the most thorough, transparent and well-documented investigations ever undertaken by the Netherlands. Not only are those making the allegations literally taking on the Dutch justice system, in person –in the person of one of its top officials, but the reputation of the Ministry of Justice itself is on the line.

Sadly, the investigation was anything but thorough, transparent or well-documented. The very serious allegations were never given the courtesy of a criminal investigation, apparently because Mr. Demmink's claims and the Dutch cannot disprove with their own records that Mr. Demmink was in Turkey in the 1990s. Over and over again, the justice minister's letter to the Dutch parliament states that there was no cause to launch a criminal investigation. With all due respect to the justice – Dutch justice minister, this is a tacit admission that a thorough investigation has never been undertaken. It makes the justice – Dutch justice ministry look a little bit like an ostrich with its head in the sand. The Dutch government freely admits that it never so much as interviewed one of the two alleged victims pressing charges, Mustafa (sp) and a third victim, who has now come forward, Yacine (sp), who has never been interviewed – has also never been interviewed.

Moreover, the Dutch investigation into whether there should be a real criminal investigation never interviewed the Turkish policeman, Mehmet Korkmaz, who admits that in the 1990s, he abducted boys for Mr. Demmink to sexually assault.

Nor did the Dutch investigation speak to the former chief of police of Istanbul, Necdet Menzir, who also contradicts Mr. Demmink's – Mr. Demmink, and states that Mr. Demmink was in Turkey in the 1990s, and that his officers were assigned to protect him. Nor did the Dutch investigation into whether there should a criminal investigation speak to Huseyin Celebi, the senior Turkish intelligence officer who in 2006, wrote a report on Mr. Demmink's travel to, and the various activities in, Turkey, during the 1990s and early 2000s, and who also says that Mr. Demmink used aliases to enter and to exit Turkey.

I live a long way and work a long way from the Netherlands, and do not claim expertise in the details of the Dutch justice system. But frankly, from my vantage point, I have to ask, how can a preliminary investigation not interview the victims or key witnesses and then claim there is nothing to investigate? Whether or not Mr. Demmink is guilty of these allegations against him, we cannot say. But I will state my strong belief that the allegations against him will not be resolved without an actual and thorough criminal investigation into the allegations raised by the victims and supported by the Turkish government

officials. The Netherlands owes this to the boys who have been grievously harmed by Mr. Demmink. And the Netherlands owes this to Mr. Demmink himself, whose name has been dogged by – by abruptly halted and grossly incomplete investigations for over a decade. Mr. Demmink himself maintains his innocence.

If he is innocent, should want this investigation to go forward so he can clear his name. So I appeal to him to state publicly his own request at an investigation be conducted.

I'd like to now introduce our very distinguished witnesses for today's briefing, and then ask them to proceed. We'll begin in order with BVW, who is a victim of child sex trafficking, child pornography, and pedophiles. He identified Joris Demmink as a man who abused him as a child and was the primary witness giving detail of a pedophilia ring in the Rolodex affair. This was the leading investigation into a pedophile network of the highest ranking politicians, civil servants, and influential government and business officials in the Netherlands, which included Joris Demmink, now the secretary-general of the Dutch Ministry of Justice. His face must remain hidden due to the highly provocative and damaging information he is privy to, and regarding the significant power brokers in the Netherlands and because of threats.

We will then hear from Ms. Adele van der Plas, who has spent the last three decades as a criminal attorney in the Netherlands. Prior to that, she taught criminal law at the University of Utrecht. Adele was a member of the Supervisory Board of the Bar Association of Amsterdam, and as a – in a pro bono capacity, she has worked tirelessly through the years, fighting injustices and judicial bias against abuse against the system. Adele is a tireless advocate for children and brings a valuable awareness to sex trafficking in Holland, which according to the United Nations, is one of the top 10 destinations for human trafficking.

We will then hear from Klaas Langendoen, who is the chief of Criminal Intelligence – former chief of the Criminal Intelligence Services for the Netherlands. Today, Klaas is a private practice and – works in private practice as an independent investigator. In his capacity as chief, he served as the lead investigator in the IRT mission, where he (combated?) drug trafficking and illegal drugs smuggled into the Netherlands.

And then finally, we will hear from Samantha Healy Vardaman, who is the lead on policy issues for Shared Hope International, coordinating advocacy efforts to further the protection of sex trafficking victims. And I would note parenthetically, with whom this commission, and me personally, with my Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Foreign Affairs Committee, which I am also a chair, have worked on legislation over the years to ensure that we have the tools in the United States, in our laws, to combat this heinous crime of trafficking in persons. So I am very, very grateful for her work and for the leadership that she has shown all these years.

After directing rule of law program in Moldova for three years, in which human trafficking issues frequently figured prominently, Samantha joined Shared Hope International in July of '05 to direct the Trafficking Markets Project,

resulting in a research report and documentary entitled “Demand,” which compares sex trafficking markets in four countries: Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands and the United States. In 2006, she began directing a three-year research project in tenuous locations into the sex trafficking of American and lawful permanent residents, minors, in the United States, funded by U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs and the Bureau of Justice Assistance. I would just point out that we, in the United States, take a backseat to no one, and while we look at other countries, we look at ourselves.

And this year’s TIP report, as in some previous ones, likewise rates the United States just as it does other countries against a backdrop of what we call minimum standards, first developed in 2000, and then continuously updated over the years. We want all victims protected, whether it be in the United States, the Netherlands or anywhere else in the world.

We are joined by Ranking Member (Cohen?), who – sorry to put you right on the spot, do you want to go back – for any comments he might have before going to our first witness.

REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN (D-TN): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your calling this meeting on this topic, that’s so, so, so important.

The idea of trafficking of children has been going on for a while, but it’s come to the public’s attention most recently in a glaring manner. I think the world is more aware of it than ever, and we need to do all we can in the United States and throughout the OSCE and the world, to end it. The idea of somebody’s liberty being taken from them is the most heinous thing that I think one can have happen to them. And for children to be taken from their parents and to be used as a commodity is so immoral that the world’s attention should and has come upon it. But the world’s resources should also come upon, and we should commit ourselves to doing all we can to rid ourselves of this decay that is within our world society. And I’m appreciative of the chairman for scheduling this important hearing, and looking forward to the testimony of the witnesses.

Thank you.

REP. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Cohen. I’d like to now – Mr. B., if you could proceed.

MR. B.: Thank you very much.

At the age of 14, I ran away from home due to trauma of my parents divorcing and the misery that I had encountered at school and at home. I took the train with the destination Amsterdam, thinking that I would find a job and create a life. Upon arrival at the Central Station, I was approached by a man who offered me a place to stay. The following morning, I awoke without any clothes, and they were taking naked photos of me. I asked him what he was going to do with those photos. He said that he would send them to my parents if I didn’t want to do what he wanted. He told me about brothels where young boys worked. I was then brought the same day to a bar; I was introduced to a man

who had a brothel for young boys. I was afraid to say no, and I was very young and innocent. The owner of the brothel forced me to work in this boys' brothel where more young minors worked. They were all underage minors between the age of 14 until 18, from various parts of Europe. All of the clients that came to this brothel were pedophiles. All the boys working, they were given drugs and alcohol. After a while, this was the daily routine of the sex, drugs and alcohol.

In addition, we were rented out for escort services to private clients and parties. The same person who ran the brothel – who ran the brothel – also made child pornography films. I performed in three of those movies. I also knew people who made snuff movies. I was offered vast sums of money to perform – yeah. I was offered vast sums of money to perform in one of these movies, but refused, due to fact that at the end of the – of these movies, the actor is killed.

As escort, I worked for the same brothel owner and worked out of a bar called the Festival Bar, where I met Professor van Roon. Professor van Roon was the man who introduced me to Joris Demmink. We were sitting at a table and he said that I needed to go outside to meet Joris Demmink in his car. Joris wanted to have anal sex with me, and I refused. I did have oral sex with him. The second time that we met, he wanted me to go with him to his home in Den Haag, Riouwstraat 13. I didn't want to go with him, as we were forbidden to leave the city of Amsterdam by our pimp.

In 1998, there was a large investigation into a pedophile network in Amsterdam and Den Haag. I was approached by several police investigation units to help with the investigation. I became the key witness of the investigation. I was offered police protection. During that time, I told of my entire period in Amsterdam in the child pornography and the child sex business.

This investigation was called the Rolodex investigation, and Professor van Roon was a key suspect in this investigation. He had a rolodex, a kind of a card file, of various high-ranking Dutch officials who were his clients and friends. I accompanied Professor van Roon on trips to Poland, but I don't know what he was doing there. Perhaps he was looking for boys for his clients. He was a broker in children for pedophiles in his network.

After my – after my period in Amsterdam, I lived in various places in the Netherlands. I also lived in Den Haag where an attempt to kill me was made. I was shot at three times. After that, I lived underground and tried to hide, as the Rolodex investigation was killed and never pursued. In addition, I was asked to cooperate in a Dutch TV news show, investigating Demmink and high-ranking pedophiles. That show was never aired.

Throughout my time in the child sex industry and after, I have been abused, rejected, raped, shot at, lied, and treated as dirt. My life has been ruined. I have to undergo long-term psychological treatment, including very strong anti-depression medication. My relation with my own two children and wife has suffered intensely.

I would like to ask the following: help bring Demmink to justice and his entire network of influential pedophiles. Those who abused me and many others like myself should be brought to court and punished if found guilty. Bring back the rule of law in the Netherlands; please help protect my identity, because I still fear for my life. I know too much about who are the pedophiles. Thank you for your time.

REP. SMITH: MR. B, thank you so very much for your extraordinary courage to come here today in the pain and agony which I can see on your face and hear in your voice. I can't say enough how we wish you well and your calls, my hope, will not go unheeded. And we will do everything we can as a commission, because if we do nothing else as a commission, it's all about protecting the victims, and so, again, I want to thank you for your extraordinary courage for being here this afternoon.

MR. B: Thank you.

REP. SMITH: I'd like to now ask Ms. Van der Plas if you would proceed.

ADELE VAN DER PLAS: (Off mic.) You hear me now? Better? Yes? A little closer, OK?

REP. SMITH: Yes. Thank you.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Thank you. First of all, I want to thank your commission for invitation to inform you about four child abuse cases we are working on for so many years already. I myself represent two Turkish witnesses who raped – who were raped and sexually abused when they were 11 and 14 years old. The perpetrator was, according to my sources, a high-ranking Dutch government official nowadays, Secretary General of the Ministry of Security and Justice in the Netherlands, Mr. Joris Demmink. I also represent B, who is present today, and already was giving a testimony to you. B was a victim of the same Dutch high-ranking official, Mr. Demmink, at a time that he, as a young boy of 14 years old, was forced to work in a brothel. I was informed about crimes committed by Mr. Demmink in Turkey by official Turkish sources. They informed me that Mr. Demmink, in '95, was caught in the act of sex with minors in Turkey while attending a party in Bodrum.

At this party, minors were abused – sexually abused, and one of the boys tried to escape and created a great deal of emotion (sic) which brought the police. Mr. Demmink was then arrested, according to my sources, and subsequently released, after which his criminal file was used in – to blackmail the Dutch authorities to take action in a case against a Kurdish activist who at that time stayed in the Netherlands. I am also the attorney of this Kurdish businessman named Mr. Baybasin. The two well-documented criminal charges that were filed against Mr. Demmink by the two Turkish, Osman and Mustafa, were never investigated, according to Dutch criminal investigative procedure. The same goes for the criminal charges filed by my other client, Mr. Baybasin, against Mr. Demmink. The victim who is present today, B, was in '98 key

witness in the so-called “Rolodex” investigation, but neither his statement ever led to an investigation. Never led to an investigation or prosecution or conviction of the real perpetrators, the high-ranking customers, the Dutch super elite of the numerous minor brothels in our capital, Amsterdam, at the time.

The question arises, Mr. Chairman: what is going on in the Netherlands? In your 2012 report on human trafficking, you recognized the Netherlands as a Tier 1 status country in full compliance with the minimum standards to combat trafficking in persons, and my experience in the four cases I represent is completely different. High-ranking government officials and politicians in the Netherlands seem to form a privileged elite who are above the law when they sexually abuse minors and will never be arrested, tried, or convicted. In 2000, the Guardian, 12 years ago, described in a very well-informed article, the Netherlands and especially Amsterdam as a paradise for pedophiles, where the police seemed to be powerless to act, and we now understand why. In '98 in Amsterdam police investigation, B spoke about it, called “Rolodex Affair,” was conducted into a pedophile network of influential Dutch customers of boys’ brothels.

The investigation targeted high-ranking Dutch officials and politicians suspected of abusing young boys in Amsterdam brothels. As a victim, B was one – what he said – of the key witnesses in that investigation. One of the suspects in that investigation was Mr. Demmink, but according to leading investigators who told me that – leading investigators in this case, according to them, as soon as Demmink became a person of interest in this matter, the investigation was shut down. Information about intended actions by the investigating police was leaked. A policeman who worked on this investigation said that he arrived at the location and the middleman of this network, Professor Varon (ph), was waiting for the police team, and not surprisingly, all video evidence was missing and all telephone communication between the suspects – which was recorded before – suddenly stopped. Law enforcement officials on the case were forced to sign non-disclosure agreements and were sworn to secrecy regarding all information pertaining to the involvement of Demmink and other high-ranking officials in this shocking behavior.

Our present State Secretary of Justice, Fred Teeven, directly under the minister of justice, was one of the leading prosecutors in this Rolodex investigation. In 2007, he expressed his frustration about the blocking of the investigation in a closed court hearing under oath. He then told the court that this investigation indeed targeted high-ranking representatives of the Dutch government – among them, prosecutors – who were sexually abusing minors. He also stated, under oath to the court, that this investigation never has led to prosecution of these suspects because of certain counter actions. 2007, he stated that under oath, and when a Dutch publication in the Gay Krant accused Mr. Demmink in 2003 of being involved in the abuse of minor boys in a park in the south of Netherlands, the newspaper – the Gay Krant for (homophile ?) people – the newspaper was forced to withdraw its accusations under threat of bankruptcy by Demmink’s lawyer.

The editor of the Gay Krant, Hen Krol, at the moment parliament member in the Netherlands, was told by Demmink in a private meeting directly after – directly after that he, Demmink, indeed has had sex with young boys without asking their age. But Demmink let Krol know during that same meeting, remember well, Mr. Krol, that we are the ones who make the laws in this country.

In 2008 and 2010, I filed three well-documented criminal charges against Mr. Demmink on behalf of my Turkish clients, Osman and Mustafa, for rape and sexual abuse of minors under the age of 16. The criminal charges filed by Mustafa against Demmink were never really investigated. The Dutch authorities dismissed the allegations after demanding that Mustafa first had to travel to the Netherlands to officially answer their questions. But meanwhile, the boy was heavily threatened and abused in Turkey. His tongue was cut with a razor blade – you have to shut your mouth – in an effort to (squench ?) his complaints. The boy was approached by the then high-ranking police chief, Emin Arslan in Turkey, who offered him a good life in case he withdrew his charges against Demmink. If not, the boy's life would be destroyed, so they told him. The boy was frightened to death, but never withdrew his charges against Demmink. He had his experience in Turkey where you don't have any right in front of such high-ranking officials, and as a result of what happened to Mustafa, I asked the Dutch prosecutor to arrange official security for Mustafa during his stay in the Netherlands to give his statement. I also asked the Dutch prosecutor to allow his lawyer to be present during the police interview, and these requests were consequently refused despite the terrifying experiences Mustafa went through.

Mustafa did not travel to Holland to answer questions about his accusations against Demmink, as a result of this, but he offered again and again to answer all questions the Dutch police and prosecutors still might have in Turkey in an official inquiry hearing. But such an inquiry has never occurred.

The second Turkish boy, Osman, traveled to the Netherlands, where he was – also a client of mine – where he was interrogated by Dutch investigators in February 2011. However, a thorough criminal investigation was never initiated in this case either. Five witnesses – and Mr. Chairman (present ?) spoke about it already – with direct knowledge about this crime were waiting in Turkey to be interviewed by Dutch prosecutors, but they were ignored until now. The Turkish policeman Mehmet Korkmaz, who was Demmink's security officer during the secretary-general's visits to Turkey and who has since admitted kidnapping minor boys for Demmink to abuse, offered – he offered to be heard by Dutch police in Turkey, despite risk of his personal safety. No one from the Netherlands ever contacted him. His testimony can be seen on the video on our website and I thought will be presented here too for some fragments out of it.

And the same goes for the former chief of the Istanbul police, Necdet Menzir. He also was willing to testify about Demmink's visits to Turkey in the '90s and the fact that his police officers were ordered to protect Demmink. No one ever contacted him, either. Subsequently also the offer of a third Turkish boy, Yacine, who said to have been sexually abused by Demmink in this Bodrum event in '95, also he was ignored by the Dutch authorities.

Despite this overwhelming amount of available primary witnesses, the criminal charges filed by Osman and Mustafa never led to an official criminal investigation as defined in the Dutch Code of Criminal Procedure. The prosecutors persisted that there was not enough ground to call Mr. Demmink a suspect and to start an official criminal investigation against him. Only a so-called exploratory investigation was conducted, and that's not even existing in Dutch Code of Criminal Procedure. And without an official criminal investigation based on the Dutch Code of Criminal Procedure, the "hands of the prosecutors were completely tied", according to their own words to Mr. Langendoen and me in a meeting.

Without an official suspect and an official criminal investigation, the prosecutors lacked the authority to travel to Turkey to interrogate the available witnesses and to properly investigate the data of Demmink's official and non-official trips in the '90s. And in the Netherlands, where it only takes an anonymous tip to initiate not only a criminal investigation, but also police actions such as arrest and house search, the reaction of the prosecutor 011 this matter can be called quite absurd.

Instead of performing its own research, the prosecutor's office has simply taken for granted Demmink's alibi that he never visited Turkey since '87. A Dutch research journalist, however, who asked the Ministry of Security and Justice to be provided with all the travel dates of their high-ranking officials in the '90s, him was told that all travel documentation older than five years was destroyed. That was in February 2012. That's why the final conclusion of the prosecutor in Osman's case in February 2012 was that it could not be confirmed that Demmink traveled to Turkey in the '90s. That's why they refused further investigation.

Moreover, Turkish authorities have leaked documents proving that, notwithstanding his denials, Joris Demmink did indeed enter Turkey in the '90s. At the time, Mr. Demmink was director-general of international affairs of the Dutch Ministry of Justice. And as a member of the European Union K4 committee, he was especially responsible for the Kurdish-Turkish conflict. Even without the Turkish documents we received, it's inconceivable for the Dutch to claim that a high-ranking European official with duties specially focused on Turkey's conflict with the Kurds would not have visited Turkey during the '90s. That would be equivalent to an American ambassador of Turkey based in Washington who never visited Turkey. Besides that, it's a fact that the Dutch authorities who received copy of the Turkish list of travel dates of Mr. Demmink never did any effort to check the status of this document in Turkey itself or to entry dates it mentions.

The travel dates of Joris Demmink are stored in the computers of the intelligence agencies in Turkey. Several sources confirmed that they have seen this information available, to me. The latest information confirming Demmink's travel dates, we received from the Turkish prosecution office in Diyarbakir, in Kurdish region. This office has started now an investigation against Demmink and two of his Turkish allies in corruption and child abuse, the former

minister of interior, Mehmet Agar, and the former police and intelligence chief, Emin Arslan, who was the one threatening Mustafa after he filed his first criminal charge. One of the first results of the recent Turkish criminal investigation is that Demmink used three different aliases to enter Turkey at the time.

The validity of Demmink's travel dates to Turkey are also confirmed by sources including the EK report of the senior Turkish intelligence official Huseyin Celebi. I gave your commission this report.

Celebi introduces himself in his letter of February 2010 as the Turkish intelligence official who wrote the EK report in 2006 to inform the highest military, political and juridical level officials in Turkey. In this – in his report, he was the first to reveal what Demmink did, travel to Turkey during the mid-1990s, and how these criminal acts were used to blackmail the Netherlands in order to force the prosecution and conviction of the Kurdish activist Baybasin for non-existent crimes, with the help of falsified telephone recordings.

In his EK report, Celebi wrote, literally: Demmink also participated in similar pedophile parties – pedophile parties in Turkey. Because a gun went off during a party in Bodrum in '95, the police arrived. Joris Demmink, who was especially occupied with the case against Baybasin in the Netherlands, visited Turkey, he says, as a tourist in '95 and for an international meeting in Antalya in June '96. And besides that, he writes literally, he entered and left Turkey in the years '97 '98, '99, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and in most of the cases he wiped his tracks. This information is collected by official and special Intelligence Services, Celebi writes. It's also known, he says, that he entered Turkey under different names.

The Dutch Prosecution Office, Mr. Chairman, never investigated the sources of the EK report either. This is surprising because the information of the EK report is confirmed in an old document of the Ministry of Justice in the Netherlands itself, in which is said that – and it was in document of '97 – in that document is said that the Baybasin case is used as leverage in order to get something done from the Turkish authorities in another case. It's very clear. And it said that the responsible official in this case was Joris Demmink, '97.

The first reaction of the Public Prosecutor on the EK report was, towards me, that in his view – and I've everything recorded on correspondence – his first reaction was that in his view, Huseyin Celebi, the intelligence officer, was a non-existent person. Huseyin Celebi then wrote his letter of February 2010, together with a photo of him in the company of a high-ranking Turkish politician of the ruling Turkish AK Party, to the Dutch authorities offering them – Celebi – to answer their questions regarding his report and accusations. Also this offer was subsequently ignored by the Public Prosecution Office.

All these facts lead to only one conclusion. The criminal charges filed by the two Turkish boys Mustafa and Osman against Demmink were never investigated. The travel movements of Demmink in the '90s were never examined. None of the witnesses presented in Turkey were heard. During the orienting investigation Demmink simply maintained his position as highest-ranking official of the Ministry of Security and Justice in the Netherlands. And on the base of this non-existent criminal investigation, the Turkish criminal charges against

Demmink were dismissed by the Dutch prosecutor. It seems to be a complete repetition of what happened in the Rolodex investigation in '98.

At the moment I'm preparing an appeal against the decision of the Dutch National Prosecution Office not to prosecute Demmink for the crimes committed in Turkey and the Netherlands against my clients Mustafa, Osman and Baybasin. I'm still waiting for a promised copy of the official file of the Turkish prosecutor who collected the entry dates of Demmink from the different authorities in Turkey in the '90s in the nineties and the aliases he used when he entered Turkey, Demmink. But according to my Turkish sources, there is considerable pressure exerted on the Turks by the Dutch not to reveal the truth.

One important issue to keep in mind is that the media have not been very supporting in informing the Dutch public about this horrific, horrific story. Most of the large mainstream media have not written anything for several years about Demmink. This weekend probably a large national newspaper is finally going to publish new material about Demmink and others victims. The power elite in the government, we are told, have – has muzzled the leading editors not to write about this story.

I am born and educated in the Netherlands. I'm proud of the values of democracy and rule of law that govern in our society. I'm here because some of our leading officials seem to have hijacked our system, abusing all their official power to cover up their ugly behavior towards young people and others. And that's terrifying. Nobody should be above the law when he sexually abuses minors or abuses his official government position to cover this up. We only search for justice, that people come in court. And we ask your commission help and advice to reach this.

In conclusion, I would like to ask you for two things: The State Department should remove the Tier 1 status from the Netherlands, as they don't deserve it as long as this goes on. And secondly, the Helsinki Commission of the U.S. State Department should put maximum pressure to have the official dates released which prove that Demmink was in Turkey in the '90s as well as other convincing evidence in the hands of the Turkish authorities; I know they have like a video made of them in raping one of the Turkish boys and used as blackmail towards the Netherlands.

Thank you for attention.

REP. SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms. van der Plas, for your very extensive testimony.

I'd like to now introduce our third very distinguished witness, the former head of the Dutch Department of Criminal Intelligence, who specialized in, as he points out in his statement, in major cases concerning organized crime. Mr. Langendoen.

KLAAS LANGENDOEN: Mr. Chairman, members of Congress, congressional staff members, I want to thank you for your kind investigation (sic) to be here today

to explain my findings in a very delicate matter.

Approximately nine years ago I was approached by the law firm Bakker Schut & van der Plas, who asked me to carry out an independent, objective investigation in the case of their client Mr. Huseyin Baybasin. The investigation had to examine alleged manipulation of wiretaps by the Dutch government, which in the – which in the Turkish case against Baybasin were used, as well as possible blackmail by the Turkish government of members of the Dutch justice department in the Netherlands.

At the start of my independent objective research, I wondered whether the theory of the law firm was not a nonsense fairy tale story. I mused that this –

Yes, yes.

I mused that this level of corruption could never occur in my country, where I've worked so hard for fighting against organized crime.

I set up my research based upon the premise that the theory of the law firm was false. I have tried to prove this. This method is called the reversed burden of proof. If there is no proof for the falsity of the theory, then the theory is correct. The research that I did in the Netherlands proved me that it was possible to manipulate wiretaps and also allowing innocent people to be found guilty. I completed my research in the Netherlands with the result that a number of scientific experts were studying the results produced.

Eventually the Dutch justice department hired an expert who was not qualified to carry out the research and came with his own conclusion. The result – the results was that this expert gave a wrong assessment upon which Baybasin was sentenced for life in prison.

After the sentencing, I continued my research, at the request of the law firm Bakker Schut & van der Plas. I don't – I did not limit my research to the Netherlands, but I did extensive research in Turkey. I've spoken with almost all the witness in this case, both individuals and various government officials. I documented my – thoroughly by both video and audio tape testimony so that they could be used as evident later.

The result – the result of my research was shocking for – were shocking for me. By speaking with many witness, a conspiracy became clear against Baybasin, the victim. There was a set-up or cover-up between Turkish and the Dutch government officials at the absolute highest levels. The witnesses confirmed what the law firm kept telling me.

The picture was – what I got was the following: A high-level Dutch justice official, during visits to Turkey, requested that young boys be brought to him to order to have sex with them. This was verified and recorded by the secret intelligence service of Turkey. A high-ranking intelligence service officer gave me a copy of a Turkish report that explained the story of the Dutch justice official who had minors brought to his hotel room for sex and the

blackmail that was carried out against him and the Netherlands by the Turkish authorities.

I finished my report with the purpose of giving this to the Dutch government so it could be used to carry out a criminal investigation. We sought to have an independent commission created to study this case and bring out all the facts. That committee was provided with all the available information. The commission also tried to reach the manipulated wiretaps and investigating them. The result was that the wiretaps were found – were found to be more than likely manipulated.

However, the research was provided – that was provided was rejected as it was found not scientific or convincing. This research was never carrying – was never carried out, and thus the truth was never revealed – sorry. At the moment that I – a decision was made – made by the commission to travel to Turkey to interview the witnesses again, the justice department intervened again and blocked this from happening. This research was therefore never taken place and the truth never revealed.

Mrs. van der Plas filed a police report on behalf of the Turkish victims with the aim that a criminal investigation will be started into the conduct of the high Dutch justice official, Mr. Joris Demmink. These type – these type of investigation in the Netherlands are carried out by the National Investigation Unit. The National Investigation Union (sic) falls directly under the College of Prosecutors, who meet regularly with Mr. Demmink, as he is the secretary-general of the justice department.

All available information were made available by Mrs. van der Plas and myself at the National Investigation Unit. We even have one of the Turkish victims travel to the Netherlands to make a statement. In addition, we also had an important witness come from Turkey to the Netherlands to speak with the National Investigation Union (sic).

The result was, as the leader of this National Investigation Unit told us, that there will be no criminal investigation. The National Investigation Union (sic) had confined itself to a so-called a “fact collection” and has had no authority to do a proper investigation. Again, a missed opportunity to fully investigate the allegations in Turkey and take testimony from the important witnesses did not happen.

In the – in the past years I have done extensive research regarding more possible child abuse victims in high police and justice officials in the Netherlands. From this research it is being crystal clear to me that there is and has been abuse of minors by high police justice officials and that all – that all efforts to criminal investigations and prosecute these cases have been blocked and covered up. During my investigation, I came in contact with one of the victims, who is here today and has told his story. After serious reflections, I have come to the conclusion that the Dutch government does not want to and will not investigate this very sensitive issue of manipulating wiretaps under which someone is wrongfully serving a life sentence and about

the young boys and the one of the highest officials justice (department ?).

It's also my conclusion that, after many, many years of research by myself, the theory of the law firm Bakker Schut van der Plas is correct. Their client, Mr. Huseyin Baybasin, was framed, and several of Mrs. van der Plas' other client were abused by justice department secretary general, Joris Demmink, when they were a minor. My confidence that the Dutch government will ever carry out a fair, independent investigation in these two issues is completely gone.

I hope that you can – or the United States can help us in resolving this matter through diplomatic or severe methods in this very sensitive issue. What I – what I would like to ask the commission is threefold. First, pressure the Turkish authorities to release all the information about the blackmailing. Second, pressure the Turkish authorities to release the travel dates of Demmink during the '90s. This will resolve the matter once and for all. And third, pressure the Turkish authorities to release the video made of Demmink raping one of the Turkish boys. Thank you for your attention.

REP. SMITH: Thank you very much for that, again, very extensive, and – you set out disprove and came to an opposite conclusion. That's quite remarkable.

I'd like to now show a very brief video, and then we'll go our fourth and final witness. And that is a video of Police Officer Korkmaz who allegedly offered Demmink security in Turkey and kidnapped boys for him for abuse, and also Mustafa, who's identifying Demmink, and we'll now watch that video.

(Video plays.)

REP. SMITH: OK, we'll now go to our fourth very distinguished witness, Miss Vardaman.

SAMANTHA VARDAMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Congressman Cohen, and to the Helsinki Commission and the Victim's Rights Caucus for keeping the spotlight on this critical issue of child sex trafficking.

The victimization endured by this man as a child is heartbreaking. Shared Hope International has been working to develop responses to child sex trafficking, restore victims and prevent victimization for 14 years. In 2006 to 2007, under a grant from the U.S. Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, Shared Hope researched sex trafficking markets in four countries. The Netherlands was one of those countries. The goal of that research was to identify commonalities that could refocus our efforts to fight trafficking on an issue basis, as opposed to a regional basis. Well, the finding was the commonality is, and was, and continues to be demand. The second commonality is that exploitation of children through sex trafficking is occurring around the world, and the Netherlands was no exception. The exploitation includes giving anything of value in exchange for pornography, sexual performance or prostitution. All three occur in nearly every country around the globe. Child sex trafficking and child sex tourism are happening in all parts of our world, and the reason is that demand exists for commercial

sexual exploitation of children.

Focusing on the findings in the Netherlands illustrates the scope of the problem. Legalized prostitution led to increased demand, and consequently, a need for more supply. But there are a limited number of adults willing to enter the prostitution, quote, “profession,” and the deficiency is filled with trafficking victims. The ban on brothels was lifted in 2000 in the Netherlands, and just a few years later, the Amsterdam City Council recognized the dangers of trafficking, deciding to close 100 of the 350 prostitution windows in the Red Light District. Amsterdam’s mayor stated, almost five years after the lifting of the brothel ban, we have to acknowledge that the aims of that law have not been reached. Lately, we’ve received more and more signals that abuse still continues. The police admit we are in the midst of modern slavery.

In 2003 in the Netherlands, there were 257 registered victims of human trafficking. A 2004 media piece reported that the Amsterdam city council was going to close the street prostitution zones. It also reported a public opinion poll taken on the issue of the resignation of one of the council members because he had been found to have purchased prostitution in that same street zone. Seventy three percent of the citizens believe that public officials should not be stigmatized for buying prostitution, and 63 percent believe the council member’s actions were a private matter, and certainly not the grounds for resignation. This is what we call a culture of tolerance, and we find that where it exists, it makes the job of fighting trafficking that much harder.

In 2004, about 8,000 prostitutes worked in Amsterdam alone, and some two-thirds of those were of foreign origin. In 2005, Dutch police received more than 600 reports of women who may have been forced into prostitution, and 400 women contacted anti-trafficking organizations for assistance. In 2007, there were 343 registered victims of sex trafficking, 25 percent of those were under 18 years old. At the time of our research in 2006 and 2007, there was reportedly no police presence between 12 a.m. and 6 a.m. in the official Red Light District in Amsterdam, a time which one trafficking victim who suffered her experiences there called, quote, “a black market of prostitution, when children became readily available.” Only five to six police officers worked in the entire Red Light District at that time. There was no capacity for investigating the illegal trafficking occurring. This was an iceberg with legal prostitution at the top masking the vast illegal activity beneath.

The Dutch criminal code in 2005 extended jurisdiction to reach citizens committing child sex tourism – that is, sexual exploitation of a child outside the Netherlands. But in the Netherlands, there continued to be increasing amount of pimping, organized crime and exploitation of children. In a 2005 news report, a former Vice officer in the Red Light District reported that the two primary groups of pimps working in that Red Light District were called, quote, “Loverboys,” and, quote: “the Turks.” He reported that law enforcement officers had three months to complete investigations, a wholly insufficient amount of time for these complicated crimes. Shared Hope’s partner Scarlet Cord worked in the Red Light District in Amsterdam doing outreach and services

to trafficking victims. They identified the Loverboy problem early on, and began to put programs into schools to educate and to prevent the recruitment of these mostly teenage victims. The Loverboy pimping method is very similar to modern trafficking in the U.S., relying on emotional bondage rather than physical force to maintain control over their young victims. In our research in the Netherlands, victims reported also that, quote, “magic” was used to entice them. But this is not limited to the Netherlands, and it’s certainly not limited to any one country. A weak link in the global dragnet and safety net will prevent us from protecting the victims of child sex trafficking.

As Congressman Smith noted at the start of this briefing, traffickers rely on the ability to frighten children, and keep them quiet, and it’s imperative that the justice system be ready now to listen to allegations and to thoroughly investigate them. Shared Hope has highlighted some promising practices through our research here in the United States in the last five years, promising practices to develop proper responses to child sex trafficking. Some of these are happening in other countries already, and all of them are transferrable to any country to take them on. First, the presence of school resource officers within schools to help build trust between law enforcement and children undermines the traffickers’ ability to scare their victims by – into distrusting law enforcement.

Education at all levels of the justice system, from investigation to trial, will lead to more identifications of child sex trafficking victimization and better responses. Above all, victim- centered approaches to interviewing and investigation are critical to a child’s confidence to disclose their victimization. A few examples exist that were – are worthy of highlighting: The Dallas police department has a High Risk Victim’s Unit, in which the process is to flag a file of a child who is a repeat runaway, and direct that file straight to this High Risk Victim’s Unit where there are child forensic interviewers ready to investigate with proper child approaches.

Gang units, like the Fairfax County gang unit in Northern Virginia, are being trained in sex trafficking identification and victim interviewing that can separate the victim from the influence and gag control of the gang. Human trafficking task forces across the U.S. and in other countries bring together service providers and law enforcement to ensure victims are supported and encouraged to seek justice. And lastly, victim witness coordinators and the majority of federal law enforcement offices across the country ensure the victim is supported through the investigation and trial process.

Shared Hope International has developed the Protected Innocence Challenge, which, though domestic, has relevance for the world. It includes a framework of laws for effective responses to child sex trafficking. The framework credits those states that have laws in place providing for victim protections and support through the investigation and trial process. Currently, 34 states in the United States currently have some protection, and all are being encouraged to enact more laws, which will ensure that more victims are heard.

And finally, as I stated several times throughout, attacking demand: Demand is

the root of the problem, and we've heard about the exploitation today of children firsthand from the people representing them. And if we could focus some of that effort on demand, maybe this wouldn't have occurred in the first place. Resources and prioritization of fighting demand are critical and lead to corroboration of a victim's complaint, less reliance on victim testimony and hopefully, and ultimately, a reduction in the number of children exploited.

Child sex trafficking is a threat to our society's health, undoubtedly. And it's truly a national and international security threat as well. It allows organized crime to prey on the most vulnerable. Until we all, as a global community and individually within our nations, our state, our cities, get serious about stopping demand, this fight has no end.

Thank you for continuing to keep this issue at the forefront.

REP. SMITH: Thank you very much, and thank you for the outstanding work that Shared Hope International has done and continues to do.

You know, I noted in reading your – Mr. Cohen, do you have any questions? Thank you so much. I noted in your report, you point out that the women in this area, talking about one of the Red Light Districts, are mostly Latin and South American, from Colombia, Cuba, Brazil and Venezuela. I was on – in Brasilia on a trip years ago to talk about an effort to get the Brazilians to pass a comprehensive strategy on combating sex trafficking, to protect their own children, because child sex tourism is so huge there. I met with parliamentarians in Brasilia for several days, but we made a one day trip to Rio de Janeiro, went to a shelter. And while I was at the shelter, there was a woman from Brazil who had just been rescued with tears pouring from her eyes – rescued a couple of days earlier – but as she told her story, she was en route to Amsterdam.

And I have raised this issue myself with the Dutch as head of delegation for the United States Parliamentary Assembly, as chairman of this Commission, that – and as you point out in your report, when you get two-thirds or more, some put it as high 80 percent or higher, of the women being foreign – even the indigenous Dutch women, it is highly suspect as to at what level of coercion have they been brought there – but when so many people from other countries are present, it begs the question about the – and there have been the rapporteur's report in previous years that strongly suggest that there are levels, and I would suggest high degrees of levels of forced fraud and coercion involved. And I saw it myself with the one rescued woman who was in a shelter in Rio de Janeiro who was saved from that nightmare of being sent as a slave to Amsterdam.

I would to ask – and if you could, Ms. Vartaman – you know, Ms. Van de Plas in her statement, in one of her two, asks was that Holland be removed from Tier 1 – your thoughts on that?

MS. VARTAMAN: Still on? I think that the assessment of Tier placement is a complicated one. And I would defer – (chuckles) – I would defer. What I would say though, is that it is clear that efforts are in place in the Netherlands,

and in the United States and in other Tier 1 countries that do reflect an intention to address trafficking. Whether those efforts are reaching their goal, I think, is a different question.

REP. SMITH: Let me ask Mr. B., if he could – you mentioned that you were not allowed to leave Amsterdam by your pimp. What would have happened had you left Amsterdam? Do you know of anybody who escaped, and what happened to them?

MR. B.: Can you do the – say again?

REP. SMITH: Yes. What would have – what would have happened had you been able to leave Amsterdam after your exploitation? Do you know of any others who did?

MR. B.: I would have been punished.

REP. SMITH: How? Beatings?

MR. B.: Sorry?

REP. SMITH: You would have been beaten, or –

MR. B.: Yeah. Beaten or worse.

REP. SMITH: Do you know who was maltreated? Who tried to escape?

MR. B.: No, I can only speak for my own.

REP. SMITH: In your presentation, you stated that various high-ranking Dutch officials were part of a pedophile ring contained in Professor van Roon's rolodex. Now you made extensive reports to the police during the investigation. Were there any law enforcement officials suspected in the investigation or others officials that might have been in place to stop that investigation?

MR. B.: Yes.

REP. SMITH: Was your pimp or anyone else ever charged as part of that investigation?

MR. B.: I don't know.

REP. SMITH: You don't know, OK. Your presentation indicates that you were prostituted at the Festival Bar in Amsterdam, along with other boys. Can you tell us what has happened to the Festival Bar after your police report? Was it shut down? And were the boys rescued?

MR. B.: The Festival Bar has changed the name, and there are still boys working.

REP. SMITH: Notwithstanding your complaint.

MS.: (Off-mic.) What's the name now?

REP. SMITH: Yeah, could you tell us what the name of it is now? Do you know?

MR. B.: No, I don't know the name, sorry.

REP. SMITH: You know, you are obviously being, you know, we are seeking to hide your identity to the greatest extent possible. Are you fearful of any retaliation because you have presented testimony here before the Helsinki Commission?

MR. B.: I don't know what happen with me if I go back to the Netherlands, if I arrive at the airport. I talked about it with my attorney.

REP. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. B. Ms. van der Plas, if I could ask you, in your presentation, you mentioned a previous case, of course, the Rolodex case, that you believe shows a pattern of investigations being shut down by Mr. Demmink. You mentioned that, quote, "According to the leading investigators in the case, as soon as Demmink became a person of interest in this matter, the investigation was shut down and that the sting operation to catch the man who identified it – Mr. B. – was compromised." This information came from leading investigators in the case, did it? And how many investigators on the case were willing to speak with you about this?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: One investigator visited my office, and told me his whole story. And he told me this: He was in the preliminary investigation and he knew very well that this Mr. Demmink was one of the suspects. And he said, we had some unofficial wiretapping, and we heard all the people speaking, but at the moment we started the official investigation, it was – all the communication was closed down. So it couldn't be different than there was a leak. And also he said, when we went to this middle man, this Mr. van Roon, he was waiting for us. He was waiting for us, and his whole house was clean. So it was very clear, he told us, oh, there you are. We are waiting you. And he also told me that the victim who is now testifying to you gave him very reliable information at the time that he found back when he did his searches.

And in question you asked the victim, I can tell you that in that case, one pimp was convicted, not very large sentence. One of it was conditional. And the condition was for a part of the prison sentence he could work in a kind of farm where children came.

So the policeman who told me that was still so angry. The policemen who worked on that case are really frustrated. And I also heard – but that was through a middleman, a journalist, who told me that the chief of the investigation team, a man who really believed in God and in good life, he told the journalist, I can't speak. I go every Sunday to the church to sing it away from me. That's what the policeman say. And I know that Mr. Langendoen next to me spoke even to other investigators who – of that team at that time who confirmed exact that information. Isn't it?

MR. LANGENDOEN: (Correct ?).

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yeah.

REP. SMITH: You mentioned that the current state secretary of justice, Fred Teevi (sp) – is that how you –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Teeven.

REP. SMITH: – Teeven stated under oath in 2007 that high-ranking Dutch officials in the Rolodex case were never prosecuted because the investigation was blocked. Was there an investigation as to Mr. Teeven's allegation that the investigation was blocked, and if so, what was the outcome?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Tell me –

REP. SMITH: Did any – did anybody look into why it was blocked?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: No. Nobody ever looked in. It's also this case was kept silenced, and it was very special that our state secretary of justice, Mr. Teeven, brought that under oath in an – in a complete different case. He said this was what happened.

And what's also interesting – that in 1999 Mr. Teeven, when he was still intelligence prosecutor, he was prosecuting that case, he gave an interview to a magazine for lawyers and he said there, it's my knowledge, as prosecutor of intelligence cases, that it's known to me that information I gathered that criminal organizations in the Netherlands have influence on politicians and even on judges.

So when you hear that, it's terrifying. He then was still prosecutor.

But the problem is, since Mr. Teeven is secretary of state, we don't hear him anymore. So what happened, I asked then, because this is what he said, and that's published. I – we even can show you, if you would like – he said that then, that he has information, because when you see – when this happened in Turkey, that foreign intelligence agencies have influence, can blackmail our government and our – that's terrifying.

But not only them; when criminal organizations deliver kids to those people – to people in – so high-ranking inside a government, a prosecution office and justice system, then those criminal organizations also have a – mean to blackmail those people. And that's going on for a long time when this already happened in the '90s.

And even our state secretary told that to a judge, told that in public, and nothing happened.

REP. SMITH: The situation with Mr. Baybasin – and maybe, Klaas, you might want

to speak to this as well – all of us are well aware of the intensity of the feelings of Turks for Kurds and vice versa.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yup.

REP. SMITH: I'll never forget, after the first Persian Gulf War, when Kurds had made their way to the border. I went over there while it was still a very volatile situation and saw as these poor people were on the border, being held by our special forces and others, to simply survive.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yes.

REP. SMITH: There were – the Turks barely allowed them to be across the border.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: That was the –

REP. SMITH: And so my point is, you know, the backdrop of that issue and, you know, the quid pro quo, perhaps, allegation, that that led to the blackmailing and the – and the situation –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: That's very clear, because Mr. –

REP. SMITH: Please, if you could just elaborate on –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: – Mr. Demmink was member of this EU KFOR (sp) committee –

REP. SMITH: Right.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: – and he was specially responsible for the Kurdish-Turkish conflict. So he had this direct connection with the Turks.

And this Mr. Baybasin, this Turkish activist, was busy to let their – the Kurds have a better life and some of them who couldn't have that to run away from there. So in that way, they were kind of – (inaudible). And that's why the Turkish government at the time said, we see this Baybasin as a real main object. We want to silence him. And you have to help us because we caught you with those kids. And that's also what Mr. Langendoen heard in Turkey.

But this whole political thing behind it is very clear, and then it's so strange that Mr. Demmink said, I didn't visit Turkey since '87. He was the main person in the Netherlands with this – who was dealing with this Kurdish-Turkish conflict and had the contacts with Turks.

REP. SMITH: Well, I think your point that an ambassador to another country would hardly stay in Washington – they would be traveling in – back and forth – would be staying there of course but in this case, when that's your duties, it would – it would be a dereliction of those duties not to be traveling to Turkey. I think that was a very –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yeah.

REP. SMITH: – very important internal strength to your argument.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yeah.

REP. SMITH: Do you – can you give any indication as to why the current Turkish leadership, when these Turkish boys were so allegedly abused and exploited and raped, wouldn't find it in their own interest to protect, you know, a Turkish citizen, not want to say, whatever happened before, so be it, but you know – not so be it; whatever happened before, you know, wherever that goes, you know, we want to protect our own children and now young adults?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yes, you could say so, but at that moment the Turkish government that was not the (now – this ?) government –

REP. SMITH: Right.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: – but was focusing on this Baybasin. They wanted to –

REP. SMITH: Oh, sure, that government. But this government, it seems to me –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yes. This – this –

REP. SMITH: – and you know, the Turkish government now –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yeah.

REP. SMITH: – more and more has spoken out against – combating human trafficking, and this is a case of their kids.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: And that's why they gave Mr. Landendoen so much information. So we – all our sources are from Turkey, official sources, other sources. Isn't it, Mr. –

MR. LANGENDOEN: (Off mic.)

MS. VAN DER PLAS: That's why they want to help us, but they – in the same time they are forced by diplomatic pressure not to give everything, just to give pieces. That's why we are hanging in between for so many years already. Yeah.

REP. SMITH: Now the major daily that may very shortly – if you wanted to speak to that, Klaas –

MR. LANGENDOEN: No, no.

REP. SMITH: OK.

MR. LANGENDOEN: (Off mic.)

REP. SMITH: The major daily or the major newspaper – would this be a

breakthrough in terms of finally bringing some light and scrutiny to the issue?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Telegraaf. This – that will come, yes, because that’s going to speak about, by the way, all the investigations Mr. Langendoen did, and there are new Dutch victims who spoke about what happened to them.

MR. : It’s coming.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: And that’s coming very soon.

MR. : (Off mic.)

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Isn’t it?

MR. : Yes, very soon.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yeah.

REP. SMITH: Could I just ask you, if I could, Ms. van der Plas – you talked about Mustafa. You mentioned that – because I have met with the ambassador of the Netherlands to the United States. I do believe in hearing from all sides and doing my due diligence – matter of fact, he did mention in his letter the Tier 1 status as if that somehow exonerated a country and that would apply to any country. You know, that may show a good trend, but if there are individual cases that need to be looked into, they need to be. But that said, you know, that says nothing about this case. But you know, he – you talked about Mustafa. He did not feel safe in traveling to the Netherlands. You mentioned contra-actions, I think, was the phrase you used.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Contra-actions was the Rolodex case.

REP. SMITH: OK. OK. It was the Rolodex –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: We had the contra-actions in the –

REP. SMITH: OK. With Mustafa, it was with safety – he was – he wanted a guarantee of safety and he also wanted a lawyer present.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yes. That’s what I wrote to the prosecutor. And then the –

REP. SMITH: Why wouldn’t the lawyer be allowed to be present with someone who wants to come forward like that? That’s baffling.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yes, the – when I asked the prosecutor – and I have it all in correspondence available – I said because of the threats the boy had, he – I would like to be present, or his Turkish lawyer, and we want security and – because he is giving a statement against the highest man at the Ministry of Justice. And for this kid, as a Turkish citizen, he knows they – those people have power.

And then he wrote back, Mrs. van der Plas, this is – “Det ist Nedeland” (sp). That means, “This is the Netherlands.”

So no, and I couldn’t guarantee my client full safety when he came. So the kid was terrified, really scared to death, yeah.

REP. SMITH: With regards to the Turkish prosecution office in Diyarbakir, you said they had now of – an active investigation against Mr. Demmink and two of the individuals worked with Turkey. Could you elaborate a little bit more on that? How long has that been going and –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: This is very recently –

REP. SMITH: Recent.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: – started, somewhere this spring, because the Turkish authorities want something and then all the time delay, and that’s why I’m waiting now with this appeal that I got the information from them. But I know that exactly last week they made some movement and they going to listen to some witnesses. So there is now some progress in it. And I think, when from United States side there is support for what they going to do in this respect, that would help them really.

REP. SMITH: Let me ask you, have you been threatened?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Have –

REP. SMITH: Have you been – personally been threatened yourself at all?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: No. No.

REP. SMITH: That’s –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: But I don’t even see it. When – I’m not – how do you call it? Available for that or open for that? (Chuckles.) Yeah. (Laughter.)

REP. SMITH: Let me ask you one final question. You mentioned that a current member of the Turkish state security council, Mr. Salibi (sp) –

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Yes.

REP. SMITH: – of the military wing of the Turkish intelligence service, sent to the Netherlands a list of the many visits he believed Mr. Demmink made to Turkey between ’95 and ’03. However, the Netherlands has dismissed the report, never contacted the author, who remains a special security adviser for, among other things, the Turkish minister of the interior.

Could you speak for other on that? Why would such information be shelved or refused to be acted upon? Or is it being acted upon in any way? And did this Mr. Salibi (sp) run a risk in providing that information himself?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Mr. Salibi (sp) made his report –

REP. SMITH: Because, again, in my conversations with the Dutch, they say that he just wasn't there. (Chuckles.) And that, you know, exonerates him and as you have pointed out others have pointed out, he came under aliases, he came other ways.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: I made some attachments for your commission.

REP. SMITH: (Inaudible.)

MS. VAN DER PLAS: His (act ?) report is in there, and Page 23 gives the dates that according – he was the first one to reveal the dates that Demmink entered Turkey in the '90s and how everything happened. But I also attached his letter to the Dutch authorities, this independent commission Mr. Langendoen spoke about, and he offered in that – he said who he was, and he offered to give all the information. But nobody ever asked him to do so and to give it. So what we gave – it was ignored. It was ignored. And we gave that to you, so what he said. And I was visiting Mr. Salibi (sp) even with Mr. Langendoen, and we discussed his report. We have photos of that. Yeah. And we have also, if – he gave us also a photo showing – look, I write this letter that I was the special adviser of the minister of interior in Turkey at that time, but here – look, me, on the airport with this actually second person in the AK Party. So this is really someone not to ignore, but the Dutch just didn't even think about it.

When I would have been Ministry of Justice in the Netherlands – (chuckles) – I am not – I should have said, OK, I – the first thing I do is transparently, openly ask the Turkish government, what is about this report? They never did, just ignored.

REP. SMITH: Is it a cover-up? Is it a cover-up?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: What's a cover-up? You mean that they don't do anything?

REP. SMITH: Right.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: What we – what we see all the time in this case – whatever we bring in, in fact, silence is after that. We are ignored.

REP. SMITH: Mr. Langendoen, let me ask you a question. You indicate that after years in the criminal justice system in the Netherlands, you were very surprised by the facts presented to you by Ms. van der Plas and her legal unit regarding the conviction of Baybasin and its relationship to the allegations against a high-ranking justice official. You said, and I quote, at the start of your "independent research," you "wondered if the theory of the law firm was not a 'nonsense' fairy tale story" and you "assumed that this level of corruption could never occur" in your country, where you had "worked so hard" against organized crime, close quote.

Is your assessment – is it your assessment that this case is an aberration from what is normal in the Netherlands, or is the sign of a systemic problem with organized crime?

MR. LANGENDOEN: Yeah, I was shocked –

REP. SMITH: Put on your – I'm sorry.

MR. LANGENDOEN: I was shocked by what I heard from the – those two lawyers. When they asked me to some investigation about it, I said, it's a fairy tale. I know Holland very well, about organized crime, all those kind of things, but those things doesn't happen in Holland. That was my opinion at that moment.

But they asked me, Klaas, please do the investigation. We believe in – we believe in the story. And after that, I must say, I think that it's true.

REP. SMITH: You were –

MR. LANGENDOEN: That the Dutch government are blackmailed in the story of the – of the – of the highest-ranking man of justice.

REP. SMITH: You mentioned that the national investigations unit did only a facts collection investigation but had no authority to do a proper investigation. What additional options and powers would have been open to an investigator if they had been empowered to open an official investigation, just so we understand the differences? Which witnesses did they not interview as a result of the limited investigation?

MR. LANGENDOEN: I asked the head of the – of that investigation – I gave him all the information. I said, I can give you the people who must do this investigation. I traveled then to Turkey. I was – very good contacts during these days in contact – intelligence service, police, everything. I can introduce them. You can do a very good investigation. He said, no, no, we do nothing.

REP. SMITH: And why do you think that's the case?

MR. LANGENDOEN: He said – he said, we don't see anything for – no facts for a criminal investigation; no, we don't do any criminal investigation. And when there is not a criminal investigation, I can't do anything.

REP. SMITH: But given your extraordinary credibility and the fact that you are a man who has made a difference in meting out justice in Holland, didn't that add to, you know, the imperative that they do something? I mean, you were presenting something – I mean, you set out to disprove – you didn't think it was real. Then you came to – it seems to me that that's –

MR. LANGENDOEN: I pressed him. I said, I've got all the information for you; I can travel with you to Turkey; we can speak to the victims, to the – to the police officer, intelligence officers. And he said, no, I'm not allowed to do that.

REP. SMITH: Not allowed.

MR. LANGENDOEN: Not allowed.

REP. SMITH: Under pain of being fired or reprimanded in some way, do you think? Or –

MR. LANGENDOEN: I don't know.'

REP. SMITH: You don't know. OK.

I'd like to yield to – without objection, to our – one of our counsels on the Helsinki Commission, Allison Hollabaugh.

Allison.

ALLISON HOLLABAUGH: Thank you all for being here today.

Mr. Langendoen, what is the current status of the Baybasin case? Your – you did extensive research into evidence tampering with the wiretaps. Has there been any movement in the Dutch government on looking into this case any further to see if there was any miscarriage of justice?

MS. VAN DER PLAAS: Maybe I will – because there happened something in that case now. Till now they refused completely to do anything. We asked again and again for investigating the – because the man was convicted on only telephone tapes. And Mr. Langendoen even interviewed, in Turkey, all the policemen who said, I was helping the Dutch to manipulate those telephone tapes at the time. But they refused till now to do an investigation.

But we made a revision request to the Supreme Court of the conviction of Mr. Baybasin. And that revision request was done April 2011. And only recently – and we brought in all the evidence we have, and we have a lot. And recently, in August 2011, the attorney general of the Supreme Court said, I require to the Supreme Court that I can do a new investigation into this case because there is so much material, but we want to verify that material. And just recently, the day we left for Washington – that was Monday or – no, Tuesday I got information from the Supreme Court that they made a quick decision. It was planned on 30 of October, but they made it last Tuesday, and they said the prosecutor, by new attorney general of the Supreme Court, by the new law, can do this investigation itself.

So I think now that the attorney general, different than the prosecution office, sees the value of what we have already, and he is now starting an investigation. And we just can hope that this will be a real investigation. He wrote in his conclusion very precisely that he wants to involve the defense very much into this investigation because also he believes in rule of law. But he said, I almost can't believe that this happened in my country, but let's go and investigate it. So this is a new development, but very recent, actually last week before we left.

MS. HOLLABAUGH: Now, will this be a full investigation or a fact-finding investigation or a completely different type because it's in court?

MS. VAN DER PLAAS: It is a very special investigation in our criminal law. It is – and it is just by new law, 1st of October, made possible. And it is a fact-finding investigation by the highest attorney general of the – of the Supreme Court into the facts we brought, the new facts for the revision. So that will be the telephone tapes, but that will also be the interrogation of a translator who knew everything and who said that this Baybasin was a purpose of the Turkish government. So he's going to interview witnesses, and he wants to make a new investigation on the telephone tapes and all the irregularities, which you can hear already, but then to investigate it really. So it can take some time, but it will be very interesting. And of course, then you can't walk along Mr. Demmink's role anymore either.

MS. HOLLABAUGH: Ms. Vardaman, you mention in your statement that legalized prostitution led to increased demand and thus a need for greater supply in relation to the Netherlands' legalization of prostitution in the year 2000. You also did a study of several other countries at the same time on your – of your 2007 study. Did you also see a similar pattern there, if any of them similarly legalized? Or do you have any other examples of legalization leading to greater demand?

MS. VARDAMAN: The other three countries, Japan, Jamaica and the United States, do not have legalized prostitution and did not at that time, except for the rare situation in the state of Nevada, where several counties still have brothels, legal brothels. And that was really the only thing we could compare to in that research. However, it did play out similarly in our research in Nevada. Las Vegas was one of the cities we focused on. And that definitely was a line of questioning that we had when we went into Las Vegas, and the similar feeling and evidence came out that there was an increase in demand for commercial sexual activity in those places where it is legal. And that included those counties in Nevada, where they saw, actually, people leaving the city of Las Vegas to travel out to the nearest county that does have legalized prostitution for that purpose.

REP. SMITH: Before we conclude – and I would ask if there's anything else you would like to share with us – I do want to mention that we did invite Ambassador-at-Large for Human Trafficking Luis CdeBaca to be here today. I have called over to the office, as has the staff several times specifically on this case, and have not heard back from them, which is disappointing because I wrote the law that created that position, both the office and the ambassador-at-large, and no call back. And you know, again, whether a country be a great friend of the United States or something less than that, friends don't let friends commit human rights abuses, and if they're – if this is an aberration or if this is a pattern, there are real victims, including the very courageous Mr. B, who's right over here, who have suffered and carry those scars, and we need to speak truth to power, wherever it is, including our own country here in the United States. So I note that with disappointment, that they're not here to be at this table to speak to this very important issue. But we will stay at that.

We do – since this is a briefing and not a formal hearing, we do entertain questions. So if there is anyone who would like to raise a question with our very distinguished witnesses or me, please proceed.

Yes.

Q: (Off mic.)

REP. SMITH: Would you take a –

MR.: Do you want to take the microphone at the end of the dais there?

Q: Hello. Hi. My name is Kwame Fosu, and I'm the policy director for the Rebecca Project for Human Rights. And thank you for holding this very important hearing. We are very grateful. And thank you for coming, Adele, Klaas and B.

What is the process? We know that the Netherlands has been cited by the United Nations as one of the top 10 tourist sex destinations –

MS.: (Off mic.)

Q: Oh, sorry – one of the top 10 destinations for sex tourism. What is the process of changing their rating from a Tier 1 country to a Tier 2 or Tier 3?

What is the actual process? How do we do this? Because it's very important to the Rebecca Project that people like Joris Demmink, who actually are in charge of prosecuting human trafficking, do come to justice. And we want to make sure that advocates in the United States are aware of this and know how we can – we can take steps to change their rating. And so we want to know what's the –

REP. SMITH: Great question. First of all, as I think many of you know, we established what we called minimum standards in the 2000 act. We built on those in the '03, the '05 and then the more recent act, adding to information as to what the backdrop is that we use in our data calls to our embassies in finding out whether or not there are prosecutions, complicity by government officials, how well or poorly the military is doing, are they complicit in trafficking. And it's a very comprehensive look. And matter of fact, in 2000 we were focusing on arrests, but we didn't get to the conviction part. And some countries actually gamed the system and did arrests, but they weren't doing anything about jail time. So we changed that in subsequent laws. The process, very simply, after that backdrop, looking at the facts, then applying what's happening on the ground with those standards, the minimum standards, as we call them – and they are minimum; they're not maximum; they're minimum, but they're very important – is for the Department of State to make a call, based on that information, as to whether or not they are Tier 1, Tier 2, watch list or egregious violators, which would be Tier 3. The process today – the designation of any country can be changed on any day if the data warrants it. It is customarily done after the TIP report is released. There's a section that has all countries ranked, including the United States. But frankly, if information comes forward suggesting that there is reason for a demotion or a change, you know, an improvement, a tier ranking can be changed on any day of the week of any month of the year. So Holland could be changed, if the Department of State and the TIP office so desired it, today or tomorrow or any other day.

But we did – by design, as Congress, did not make tier callings. We felt that it would be best done by each of our embassies, feeding into the TIP office itself. And as we all know, there is a political struggle within the Department of State. There are many ambassadors who don't want their country being designated Tier 3. There's a great deal of push-back. I think that's unfortunate. It ought to be all about the Mr. Bs and the victims, because there is a two-part strategy there: first the designation, and then what do you do with it. There are a number of actions that can be taken in terms of penalties. And hopefully, the penalties will be commensurate with the tier rating.

But if a country does start to make some real progress – and we've had a number of countries that have done that. Great allies like Israel and South Korea were Tier 3 countries. And Israel moved heaven and earth to close brothels and to make sure that women, especially in Tel Aviv, were not being exploited. And in like manner, South Korea passed a number of important laws and policies to mitigate trafficking, particularly sex trafficking, in that country. So, you know, it's all about making the call based on the facts.

I have argued for a long time that Holland does not deserve to be on Tier 1 because of the enormously large number of women and boys and young people who are exploited in the 13, as Ms. Vardaman told us, red-light districts in that country. And you know, the line of demarcation between a trafficking victim

and a woman who purports to be there on her own volition is very threadbare indeed. There are levels of (forced ?) fraud and coercion that could be easily missed by someone who is inclined to think it's all OK, and added to that, anyone who has not attained the age of 18. So all of these young boys that are being exploited, and young girls, in Amsterdam, in the facility that is still or the brothel that still has people in it with a different name, is a trafficking crime because, you know, one commercial sex act, our definition in the law, and anyone who has not attained the age of 18 is, by definition, a sex trafficking victim. So I would encourage, even admonish the administration to rethink its Tier 1 designation.

But I've done that before and have gotten nowhere. Thank you for the question.

Q: I have a question.

REP. SMITH: Yes.

Q: Dr. Cassie Bavin (ph), used to work on this committee, and for you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to know, given the fact that we don't really have jurisdiction over Holland and there is no real nexus to be able to make much change in another country, how do we enforce – I mean, one, how do we – how would we keep the secretary-general or anyone else who's an offender out of the United States? And you know, what kind of resolution, what kind of enforcement could we in the United States have as a Congress to be able to keep someone out? And the other is to how can we get Holland and other countries that have – that have voluntarily entered into agreements such as the Palermo Protocols, why is not – you know, how do you get countries to follow their own agreements that they agreed to enforce in their own countries? I mean, everybody is saying, you know, your threes – your three Ps, you'll protect, prevent and prosecute. But, you know, we're not seeing it. And I think it's outrageous that the TIP Office doesn't respond to the chairman of a committee like this and the author of the bill, who is much esteemed by everyone in this room and in every place. So that's outrageous.

REP. SMITH: Thank you, Cassie (sp). Is that for me or the others or for all of us? Well, I'll just take a couple –

Q: (Off mic.)

REP. SMITH: OK. Yeah, please. Ms. van der Plas?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: To understand well, you see, you can have nice regulations, but when something is behind it, like hidden, that even policemen are forced to silent down. That's the point. I think it's very important that the facts we bring now are included in the conversations, in the estimations. And that's the only thing to do, because you can make rules, but – that's what I say. I'm educated in a country where I – yeah, rule of law and so on, but when you see then the reality and the practice, that can really frustrate.

And it's very important, like you – as the chairman's already said, we have to listen to the victims. But it's also very important in a country like the Netherlands, that – and that's what I saw those last years very clearly, that people working as policemen, really honest policemen, even honest prosecutors, I have them seen in my office sometimes with tears in their eyes that they

could not go on. They were scared they lose – some lost their jobs because they didn't want to go on.

It's very important that we find a way to support the good people in those systems who want to do something and that – and when policemen are forced to shut – to close their mouths, that we find a way to support them, to help them.

And that's a very difficult thing because what you see is that people shut their mouths and say, OK, Mrs. van der Plas, I know much more, but I'm not going to tell you till I'm retired because I'm still scared for my profession, for my little house. I have children. This is at the moment a mentality in the Netherlands. And that was shocking me. And I think people have to come out, and the people who come has to be supported. We have to say, OK, when you deny it, give – hear are facts. And what are your facts?

So that's why we come here, because there was a bit discrepancy between – that she says, yes, but the Netherlands are doing a lot of effort in new laws and things like that. I don't deny that; I just see what's happening behind the screens that makes – it's like you paint your ceiling white, but the roof is – still has holes, and water pours in. That's the whole problem. And how do we find a solution for that?

REP. SMITH: I would add there is no statute of limitations on rape and exploitation of young children. As I said in my opening, I can't think of a more egregious crime against a human being than rape and than rape of a child. And we know with the victims that the scars are lifelong, can perhaps never be mitigated, but they – we need to stand with them, that there is justice for those who commit these crimes.

The importance of a hearing like this is to try to bring light and scrutiny, to try to persuade the Dutch government, who is a close ally of the United States, that this is an embarrassment. And if we're wrong, if this information is not correct, if this is some grand conspiracy, the purpose of which I can't even begin to think why, I mean, before we decided to do this, we did our due diligence on our side. And that doesn't mean we have absolutely everything. But that's why we have asked for an investigation that will go – that will go on beyond the (cursory ?). And to have a man of Klaas' stratus – status, I should say, a man who, you know, who made it his business to put criminals away for life, you know, that have committed terrible crimes, brings an enormous amount of credibility, as do you all. And to hear from the victims themselves is numbing.

In terms of what we should do, our own TIP Office needs – should be here. It's not. I will ask again that they engage on this. Maybe they have, and I'd love to see the information. I wanted it before we actually had this briefing. Our appeal is to the government, and I hope that they will respond and they will indicate if the attorney general takes this up, that – you know, for their own reasons, because they care about justice. You care about – Holland is a rule-of-law country.

And again, with regards to tiers, as I said before, we did not mince –

designated our best friends in the world who are at risk: South Korea, with the threat in the north; Israel, who is a – our greatest ally in the Middle East, close – the only democracy in the Middle East was on Tier 3 during the Bush administration. And I always applauded that courage to do that.

And I would note, parenthetically, that this bill – and Cassie (sp) remembers this because she worked with us to help get it enacted in the first place – was vigorously opposed by the Clinton administration on the record. Harold Koh sat where you sat – who's now counsel at State – they did not want to have the naming of names because it is embarrassing; it complicates all the niceties of statecraft. And they did not want sanctions. My argument is, everyone will agree, if it's all done in the abstract, to combating trafficking; not so when you really do the data calls, you do the hard work and say there are people – victims like – you know, like Mr. B, who – that's why we do this law, period. And so naming is important. And I hope the TIP Office takes a good look at this and reviews this.

Finally, I am the special representative for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. I do think it is my job in that capacity to raise these issues in the hope that very well-meaning and – people committed to the rule of law, which we know the Dutch government has, as you pointed out, Ms. van der Plas, there are these great policemen who are frustrated – just do it right – you know, and we're trying to form some support for that.

Anybody else? Yes.

Q: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm HP Schreinemachers. I'm counselor for justice and home affairs at the Netherlands Embassy.

Just for the record, I wanted to make one comment, please, if you allow me. And that is that contrary to the impression that the panel might have given you, the Netherlands takes the fight against child sex trafficking very seriously. And we could have commented if we would have been invited to this panel. But it wasn't until we protested not being included on this one-sided panel that you came back last Monday offering us the opportunity to ask the first question and send in a written statement. Well, since just asking a question or giving a short remark like this one doesn't compensate for the one-sidedness, we declined to do so. We did, however, send in the letter – (inaudible) – the minister of security and justice has sent to the Dutch Parliament, and I would refer to them. Thank you.

REP. SMITH: Could I ask you, please, if you don't mind, was there anything you heard today that caused you to rethink that perhaps there is a very credible story here?

Q: I think that I'm not on the panel, so that's not the way to address questions to me. But I – (inaudible) –

REP. SMITH: No, it's a give-and-take. This is not a hearing. And you have the floor, and I'm asking you a very serious question.

Q: And I'm – I was in the process of giving you an answer, but I wanted to make that clear first. And that is that the information that has been given today is – has all been available. And therefore, I think it's good that Mrs. van der Plas indicated that she's going to take this – what is now amounting to a public trial to the court of appeals, and I think that's where it belongs. Thank you.

REP. SMITH: OK. Any other questions?

Anything you'd like to say in sum, as we – before we close down?

MS. VAN DER PLAS: I would like to thank you very much and your commission. I have a copy of what I sent, but – we gave it already but with the attachment. So (there's ?) one copy with this – (inaudible) – report and the letter of Mrs. – (off mic) – and thank you so much for what you do in general for the anti-human trafficking act of 2001. I was reading it from Internet. I could follow everything. It's very good, tremendous job. And I even also heard Mr. Obama speaking when I was (at ?) the United Nations conference that this is a new form of slavery. And thank you very much for this effort, this emphasize you made on this already for so many years, and hearing us here and that we could bring here the problem we are fighting for for so many years already. Thank you.

REP. SMITH: Thank you so very much. And I will say that if the Dutch government would like to, we will convene a second hearing and invite you to the witness table. We'll work out a date, and I look forward to it. Hearing's adjourned.

MS. VAN DER PLAS: Would be marvelous, yeah.

(END)